

Montgomery County – DHHS
Asian American Health Initiative (AAHI) Steering Committee Meeting
November 10, 2015

<u>Steering Committee</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>AAHI Staff</u>	<u>Present</u>
<i>Organizational Members</i>			
Ji-Hye Park on behalf of Ji-Young Cho	X	Perry Chan	X
Wilbur Friedman	X	Harihar Bhattarai	X
Christina Lee	X	Huyen Bui	
Meng K. Lee (Chair)	X	Shannon Lee	
Michael Lin	X	Neena Kuruvilla	X
Mayur Mody		Sanjana Quasem	X
Sam Mukherjee	X	Betty Lam	X
Nguyen Nguyen	X		
Tho Tran			
Sovan Tun	X		
Edward Wan	X		
<i>Individual Members</i>			
Nerita Estampador (Vice-Chair)		Eileen Bennett	X
Sunmin Lee			
Cathy Ng			
<i>Affiliate Members</i>			
Anis Ahmed			

Welcome (Meng K. Lee, Chair)

- Meng K. Lee calls the meeting to order at 6:22 PM.

Approval of Agenda (Meng K. Lee, Chair)

- Meng moves to approve the agenda and Wilbur Friedman seconds the motion.
- Meng motions to amend the agenda. After the Healthy Montgomery updates, he would like to include updates from the Asian American Pacific Islander Advisory Group.
- Agenda approves with no objections.

AAHI Program Updates (Perry Chan, Program Manager)

ECHO Workshop: Finding Census Data

- Perry thanks the Steering Committee (SC) members who attended the Empowering Community Health Organizations (ECHO) workshop on November 2, 2015.
- Perry shares that over 30 participants attended the workshop.
- Perry provides some of the feedback from the ECHO evaluation. Ninety percent of workshop attendees rated the workshop presentation and interactive demonstration as good or excellent. In terms of overall quality of the workshop, 86% of attendees gave AAHI a rating of good or excellent.

- Perry explained that this ECHO workshop was purposefully limited to 50 participants.
- Perry goes on the share that over 50% of the workshop time was spent on the FactFinder exercises.
- Perry notes that a challenge of this and past workshops is the traffic at that time of day.
- Perry asks if any SC members have comments about the ECHO workshop.
- Meng responds that the workshop was very useful but he regrets that participants did not have more time to complete the exercises.
- Michael Lin asks if American FactFinder is based on American Community Survey (ACS).
- Perry responds that ACS is a main source.
- Perry states that the information from the workshop will be sent out in a meeting summary for those who could not attend.

Job Posting: Senior Program Coordinator

- Perry asks if members can help disseminate the Senior Program Coordinator position description to their network.
- Perry shares that the job was posted on the AAHI website yesterday.
- Michael asks if the posting is open for a certain window of time.
- Perry responds that it is a contractor position, so there is no limit to how long the position is open. A consultant is helping AAHI find a candidate until it is filled and position requirements are satisfied.
- Nguyen Nguyen asks if the position has any time-commitment requirements.
- Perry responds that the length of stay the position is not a requirement.
- Nguyen suggests that requiring two years position to encourage people to stay.
- Meng says that positions that include position-specific training can sometimes require a minimum commitment for length of stay. He doubts AAHI can require someone to fill the position for two years.
- Perry states that this position is a Primary Care Coalition (PCC) position. He will consult PCC about the possibility of including time requirements in the job description.

Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (Eileen Bennett)

- Meng introduces Eileen Bennett who works with the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program.
- Eileen shares that the Ombudsman Program is responsible for resolving issues with licensed nursing homes and assisted living facilities in the county.
- Eileen explains that the Ombudsman Program works on issues brought up by residents. Resident permission is needed to start resolving an issue and residents can terminate the process at any time.
- Eileen notes that if a resident wants to terminate the process, the Ombudsman can only begin working on the issue again if one of two things occurs:

- The resident changes their mind and wants to resolve the issue.
- The Ombudsman observes that complaints similar to the one initially brought up by the resident has been noted by a number of other residents as well.

Nursing Homes

- Eileen shares that nursing homes are the second most highly regulated government institution.
- Eileen says that the government pays for the majority of care in nursing homes.
- Eileen states that there is no subsidy available for assisted living. Assisted living places are funded through private money and they provide high acuity complex medical care.
- Eileen states that more medical care is necessary at assisted living locations to keep people out of nursing homes.
- Eileen discusses factors that are important when choosing the best nursing home:
 - Geography: There are 34 nursing homes in the county.
 - Religion: Some faith-based communities exist.
 - Availability: Bed availability varies from site to site.
 - Services: Some facilities have limitations with ventilators and dialysis.
 - Mental Health Needs: Only one nursing home provides mental health treatment.

Assisted Living Facilities

- Eileen shares that the 225 assisted living facilities fall into two categories:
 - Large assisted living facilities: There are about 35 of these types of facilities.
 - Senior group homes: There are about 175-195 of these types of facilities. This can be in an apartment, townhouse, home, mansion, etc. Information about these homes is public. They have an average of 4-8 residents and a maximum occupancy of 16.
- Eileen explains that assisted living facilities provide different levels of service:
 - Level 1: Help with getting dressed and taking medicine.
 - Level 2: Help with feeding, getting dressed, and taking medicine.
 - Level 3: Help with everything (could need nursing home care).

Ombudsman Services

- Eileen passes out a program brochure.
- Eileen says Ombudsman works with 40 volunteers and 6.5 staff numbers.
- Eileen states that when disagreements occur between resident and family members, Ombudsman always sides with the resident.
- Eileen emphasizes the residents' right to refuse treatment.
- Eileen states that the pamphlet guide to choosing a nursing home is available in several languages online.
- Meng asks if this is a federal publication.

- Eileen responds that it is.
- Eileen says the other publication is a guide to advocate for oneself in nursing homes. It is also applicable to assisted living.
- Eileen states that few laws differ between nursing homes and assisted living.

Diversity and Recruitment of Volunteers

- Betty Lam asks about the diversity of the volunteers.
- Eileen responds that Ombudsman never has enough diversity in volunteers. They have Vietnamese, Spanish, Hindi, Yiddish, and Russian speaking volunteers. Often the language line is used to converse with residents who speak different languages.
- Eileen shares that two nursing homes, Oakview and Randolph Hills (now NMS Silver Spring) had a large Korean population because they were Korean-owned. However both have been sold to new owners. Oakview is still a Korean-oriented nursing home.
- Betty asks who recruits the volunteers.
- Eileen responds that she does the recruitment. Recruitment is done two to three times a year. Volunteers go through a 30 hour training session that spans a week long.
- Edward Wan asks if volunteers are middle-age or older.
- Eileen responds that most volunteers are middle-age or older. She says there is a minimum age of 21 and volunteers are required to commit for at least one year.

Diversity and Senior Services

- Sam Mukherjee notes that the County needs some sort of policy that synchronizes with their changing demographics.
- Eileen responds that she agrees the demographics are changing. She goes on to state that facilities are not state or county operated. They are businesses.
- Eileen says the demographics in the resident population are changing as we see the demographics in the County change, but not as quickly as we might think.
- Sam comments that in the next fifteen to twenty years the number of Asian American seniors will increase rapidly.
- Eileen responds by highlighting the importance of caring for elders of all backgrounds. She notes the importance of language in communicating healthcare preferences.
- Meng asks how AAHI can work with this program to inform the Asian American community and improve the current system.
- Eileen responds that the Commission on Aging conducted a summer study which provides systematic recommendations. The study results may provide guidance to AAHI.

Additional Questions

- Wilbur asks about Eileen mentioning that people who are like each other stick together. He asks if that means re-segregation.

- Eileen responds that this does not mean re-segregation, but rather people who have some similarities may discover each other when they enter into the same community.
- Sovan Tun asks if Ombudsman works with patients with long-term care insurance.
- Eileen responds they sometimes do work with clients with long-term care, however it is a very small number of people.
- Michael asks how this information can be relayed to the community
- Eileen responds that every building has a poster with the contact information for the Ombudsman Program and for the Office of Healthcare Quality.
- Nguyen asks if it is myth that people in nursing homes are in a worse health condition than people in assisted living homes.
- Eileen responds that it is a myth.
- Nguyen asks if the regulations for nursing homes applies to assisted living homes. He also asks if the regulations in assisted living are more relaxed than in nursing homes.
- Eileen responds that assisted living has its own set of state regulations. Assisted living regulations are not as restrictive as nursing home regulations.
- Nguyen asks whether complaints and comments from residents are kept in a database.
- Eileen responds that Ombudsman maintains a database of filed complaints.
- Nguyen asks if the database can serve as a source of information that can be used to learn about the needs of the community.
- Eileen responds that the data is available.
- Ji-Hye Park asks if Eileen can give a rough percentage of the demographics that file complaints and whether they were filed by a family member or the residents.
- Eileen responds that Ombudsman does not keep demographic information about the complaints but does track whether complaints are by residents.
- Meng thanks Eileen and suggests moving on because of the lack of time.
- Eileen says she is available through phone or email for additional questions.

Healthy Montgomery Updates (Perry Chan/Nguyen Nguyen)

- Perry comments that the next Healthy Montgomery (HM) meeting has been rescheduled from December 7, 2015 to December 14, 2015.
- Perry shares that 15 Community Conversations have been conducted, including one with the AAHI Steering Committee and members of the Korean, Chinese, and Vietnamese communities.
- Perry states HM is developing a final report. HM is also developing a communication strategy to bring the information back to the community.
- Perry notes that, from his understanding, HM plans to translate the individual reports for the Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese conversations. They also plan to translate the executive summary of the overall report.

- Nguyen asks if the reports are produced for individual meetings.
- Perry replies that HM will have an individual report for each Community Conversation.
- Perry states that the individual reports will be appendices to the larger report.
- Michael asks when the report is expected to be completed.
- Perry responds that the report is expected around January.
- Michael comments that the report may not be included in the budget consideration because of the timeline.
- Perry responds that the individual community conversation reports are ready.
- Nguyen responds to Michael. He says it is not clear if the report will be used in budget decisions.
- Meng asks if there are any further questions.
- Perry thanks Nguyen and others who organized a Community Conversation.

Asian American Pacific Islander Advisory Group Updates (Sam Mukherjee)

- Sam updates that for the past year, two points have been aggressively pursued by the members of Asian American Pacific Islander Advisory Group (AAPIAG): the demography of the County's boards and commissions and County grants

Boards and Commissions

- Sam states that the diversity of the boards and commissions does not reflect the diversity of the County. They are asking organizations, like AAHI, to encourage members of their community to apply for vacancies in boards and commissions.
- Nguyen mentions that after viewing the County Executive's website, the level of need and commitment for the boards and commissions was not very clear.
- Michael asks if there is some term limit.
- Sam responds that the term limit is about two years.
- Sam explains that after the applications have been received, applicants are selected for an interview. After the interview, if the individual has been selected the name goes to the County Executive, who then appoints them.

County Grants

- Sam moves on to the second point: county grants. The County Executive and the County Council both have discretionary money to offer as grants.
- Sam explains that after one applies, there is an approval committee that reviews the grant applications. Many members have been on the committee for decades.
- Sam notes trends which highlight the lack of approved Asian American applicants.
- Michael comments that perhaps not many Asians apply.
- Sam replies that in the past committee members have commented that applications from Asian Americans were poorly written.

- Sam shares that Diane Vu has worked to address this issue and moving forward individuals will be called in for face-to-face interviews.
- Sam states that the challenge now is to ensure that the approval process is fair.
- Sam states that AAPIAG will meet with Joan Shaffer. He shares that Roger Berliner and Craig Rice are helping with this meeting.

Letter to the Director – Affordable Care Act (Meng Lee)

- Meng shares that a letter was drafted, approved by the majority of members, and sent to the Uma Ahluwalia last week regarding concerns with the Affordable Care Act (ACA) enrollment. A response has not yet been received.
- Meng says that the SC will ask for a meeting with Uma once she responds to the letter.
- Nguyen comments that any action after hearing from Uma must be done soon.
- Meng responds that he will raise the issue in December if there is no response.
- Nguyen suggests that the SC take time to prepare for that meeting. It will be helpful to come up with specific “asks” that the SC wants the director to take action on.
- Edward asks what issues were experienced last year.
- Nguyen responds that the issues from last year are described in the letter.
- Meng reminds everyone that the letter is in the packet. He says the SC must wait for the director’s response to determine their strategy.
- Sam comments that time is running out and open enrollment is important because many Asians have small businesses.

Budget Requests

- Meng shares that he had a meeting with Craig Rice, at the urging of Grace Rivera from the Latino Health Initiative (LHI).
- Meng says that Craig would like to give each of the three minority initiatives a funding of \$250,000 for fiscal year 2017 (FY17). Craig believes he can get five members of the County Council to support this funding; however he needs the SC’s support.
- Edward asks if this is in addition to what we have.
- Meng responds that yes it is.
- Meng says that after the meeting with Craig, the SC attended the HHS Community Budget Forum with Uma that evening and presented a budget proposal that included the request for \$250,000.
- Meng states that the next step is for the SC to meet with Uma to discuss this budget request. If Uma puts the \$250,000 request in her budget request, it will be easier to get the County Council to approve the whole request. It is for this reason that the AAHI SC needs to meet with Uma on December 8, 2015.
- Meng passes around a form for SC members to sign up for different committees.

- The Advocacy Committee should be present at the meeting with Uma on December 8, 2015. If ACA is discussed, it may be necessary for more SC members to attend.
- Wilbur asks if Meng has an idea of how to spend \$250,000.
- Meng says it is in the blue packet.
- Michael asks if Uma's decision to include the \$250,000 request will be dependent on whether or not she thinks Ike Legget will approve it.
- Meng responds that if it is not included, then Craig and the County Council will have to initiate it, which is more difficult.
- Nguyen asks if Uma's inclusion of the \$250,000 in the budget will risk other money being cut from the budget that supports existing programs.
- Meng responds that he is not sure what will happen.
- Betty says that she thinks it is very unlikely that Uma will include this in her budget because all the executive departments have been instructed to cut, not to add. Nonetheless Betty encourages the SC to ask for the funding.
- Betty recommends that the next step is to request a meeting with the County Executive and with Chuck Short. Next the SC should meet with the County Council, particularly with members of the Council HHS committee. She also suggests including Linda McMillan.
- Meng comments that based on the Budget Forum, Uma is proposing to reduce the AAHI budget by \$100,000.
- Betty clarifies that the slide Meng is referring to details the fiscal year 2016 savings plan where AAHI was cut by \$10,000, not \$100,000.

Advocacy

- Meng says that the three initiatives will meet with Ike and Chuck together. Then the SC will need to write a letter to the County Council and possibly meet with three to five County Council members early next year.
- Sam shares that he has already met with a number of County Council members. A number of councilmembers have expressed their support of healthcare services.
- Nguyen asks when the Council will make the decision for the FY17 budget.
- Betty responds that the Department will give the County Executive the budget recommendation by December. The County Executive has until March to submit the budget to the Council, and the Council will make the budget decision between March and May. She states that now would be the correct time to meet with the Department.
- Nguyen comments that advocacy should happen in early December until the second week of January. A hard push is needed due to the approaching holiday.
- Sam comments that once the County Executive receives the budget from Uma, it will be public and then the SC should meet with him.

- Betty states that the budget recommendation will become public once the County Executive sends it to the County Council.
- Meng says that this year advocacy is more important than ever because of the \$250,000 for each initiative.
- Sam comments that while he thinks Uma may support AAHI in morale, she will likely not be able to include the \$250,000 in the budget recommendation. He suggests that the SC talk to Uma to see if there is another way to get that funding. He also suggests that the SC meet again with Craig Rice.
- Meng agrees but states that meeting with anyone above Uma should be done with the three initiatives together.
- Nguyen suggests that perhaps the SC should encourage other community organizations to work together to write a grant to receive funding. The Council may in turn request that the organization work with AAHI to receive the money.
- Meng comments that it is possible to do that. The \$250,000 is separate from that.
- Michael asks what the other initiatives have planned for their proposals.
- Meng responds that the African American Health Program did not present their proposal at the meeting. The Latino Health Initiative stated that the \$250,000 would be used to support an increase in their number of applicants.
- Sam comments that AAHI can make a similar statement, especially if AAHI extends into the Middle Eastern community as has been discussed in the past.

Other Business

Guideline Updates

- Meng asks Wilbur about the status of the Guideline update.
- Wilbur responds that he has not called the meeting yet. The committee includes Nerita Estampador and Sam.
- Wilbur shares that there are at least four guidelines that need to be reviewed.

Montgomery Cares

- Meng states that the SC no longer has a representative with Montgomery Cares.
- Meng shares updates that he has received from the Primary Care Coalition (PCC). Montgomery Cares is transitioning from an eligibility to enrollment program. People must apply and register before a service is rendered.
- Meng states that Montgomery Cares is shifting their focus from the low income, uninsured population to just the low income population.

Future Meetings

- Nguyen comments that having Eileen talk about senior care was beneficial. He asks if the SC can hear more about mental health and the Medical Assistance Program.
- Perry says he will try to find out more about the Medical Assistance Program.

- Sam asks if there are any more meetings this year.
- Meng says the next meeting is in January.
- Perry says the Advocacy Committee should expect to meet offline before the meeting with Uma.
- Meng comments that the Advocacy Committee will be very busy from now until April.

Adjourn

- Meng adjourns the meeting.
- Meeting adjourned at 8:19 pm.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, January 12, 2016